

**News Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Paid Work Experience Program for Young Adults Continuing in Northwest Michigan**

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI—A program providing meaningful work experience and income for young adults is continuing in northwest Lower Michigan. Northwest Michigan Works! has received a \$220,000 state grant for the Young Professionals program. The program provides young adults with job skills, earned income, and career exploration and preparation activities.

Northwest Michigan Works! will continue to partner with the Char-Em ISD, Northwest Education Services, and Wexford-Missaukee ISD to offer the Young Professionals program. At Char-Em, the program will offer training and jobs in a variety of industries including automotive, construction, IT, landscaping, and power sports. Northwest Education Services and Wexford-Missaukee ISD will each offer welding classes.

“Programs like the Young Professional program offer both the student and business owner a low risk opportunity, where the student can apply skills learned through our CTE programs in a real-world work environment provided by the business owner, which can result in a longer term employment arrangement beyond this program,” said Jim Rummer, Director of Career and Technical Education at the Char-Em ISD.

“The Young Professionals program has had a significant impact on those students who participate,” said Tim Rigling, Assistant Superintendent of Career and Technical Education at the Wexford-Missaukee ISD. “Not only are the students learning a valuable skill in our welding program, they are also gaining confidence, self-esteem, and practical “life skills” along the way. Students are able to explore a possible career path while being paid for the experience; without which some would not be able to participate.”

(MORE)

The Young Professionals initiative is designed to reduce youth unemployment and place young adults, ages 14-24, on the right path to achieve lifelong economic self-sufficiency. The initiative supports young adults who are struggling to obtain employment by exposing them to multiple career and educational opportunities, such as entering a Registered Apprenticeship program, earning a college degree or certificate, and obtaining sustainable employment.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution, file format, and file size. Or phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: [networksnorthwest.org/media](http://networksnorthwest.org/media).

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10-county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC), various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business, and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our website, [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org). Networks Northwest's member counties are Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.